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VIRGINIA WORKPLACE FATALITIES DROP FOUR PERCENT DURING 2000

RICHMOND – The Virginia Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) showed 148 occupational fatalities in the Commonwealth in 2000, a decrease of six from 154 fatalities in 1999. Transportation accidents, which includes highway, nonhighway, pedestrian, air, water, and rail fatalities, declined by 16 in 2000 and were the lowest since the census began in 1992, but were still the leading cause of fatalities in the workplace, accounting for 48 deaths. The decrease from 1999 was again mainly due to a decline of cases in which vehicles struck stationary objects or equipment on the side of the road. Assaults and violent acts, which includes homicides and suicides, had 26 or 18 percent of the fatal workplace injuries. Fires and explosions showed the largest increase, growing by 7 from 1999. (See table 1.) Fifty-nine of the 148 work-related fatalities for 2000 were in the Department of Labor and Industry's jurisdiction and therefore were investigated by its Safety and Health investigation team.

Operators, fabricators, and laborers, the largest summary occupational group, accounted for 49 of the fatal workplace incidents, a decrease of 15 from 1999 to 2000. The summary group with the largest increase was managerial and professional specialty, which made up 18 of the workplace fatalities in 2000 and increased by 11 from 1999. (See table 3.) The construction industry division had the most deaths in the census and accounted for 24 percent of the fatalities in 2000. The industry division with the largest increase was services, which had 21 fatalities and increased by nine from 1999. (See table 4.) The month of August had the highest number of

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work-related fatalities for 2000, while November had the lowest. (See figure 1.) Tuesday had the highest count of workplace fatalities (29) and Sunday had the lowest (7).

“Safe and healthy workplaces are critical to the success and well-being of Virginia workers and their employers,” noted Secretary of Commerce and Trade, Barry E. DuVal. “The annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries helps the Department of Labor and Industry monitor worker safety and health in the Commonwealth and facilitates prevention of future job-related fatalities.”

“Knowing how fatalities happen helps pinpoint where safety and health problems may exist, and efforts to address hazards can be put in place if needed,” said Labor and Industry Commissioner Jeff D. Brown. “The decrease, even though small, in the number of workplace fatalities in 2000 is a testament to our efforts, as well as those of Virginia businesses, of striving to ensure safe and healthy environments in the Commonwealth.”

Nationwide, a total of 5,915 fatal work injuries were recorded in 2000, a decline of about 2 percent from 1999, according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. The decline occurred even though overall employment increased in 2000. The number of job-related deaths from highway incidents, the most frequent fatal work injury, declined for the first time since the fatality census was first conducted in 1992. Fatalities resulting from electrocutions, fires and explosions, and contact with objects or equipment also were down in 2000. Fatal job-related falls and homicides both increased.

Table A. Fatal occupational injuries by event by year, Virginia

	Average 1992 - 1999	1995	1996	1997	1998 ¹	1999	2000
Transportation incidents	66	60	60	66	76	64	48
Assaults and violent acts	24	20	16	27	41	26	26
Contact with objects and equipment	29	16	34	32	26	19	22
Falls	18	19	18	22	23	19	22
Exposure to harmful substances or environments	15	13	16	13	10	20	18
Fires and explosions	5	4	8	3	-	5	12
Total workplace fatalities	157	132	153	166	177	154	148

¹ The Press Release issued by the VA Department of Labor and Industry on Sept. 28, 1999 reported a total of 176 workplace fatalities in Virginia. Since then, one additional occupational fatality was identified, bringing the total work-related fatality count for Virginia in 1998 to 177.

NOTE: Dashes indicate numbers that represent less than three separate incidents and that are not shown due to our confidentiality agreement with the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

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Highlights from the 2000 Virginia Workplace Fatality Census

Virginia Statewide

- ❖ Seventy-eight percent of the employees killed on the job were wage and salary workers; the rest were self-employed.
- ❖ Men accounted for 90 percent of the work-related fatalities in Virginia.
- ❖ Workers aged 25-54, the prime working age group, made up 69 percent of the fatalities in 2000.
- ❖ Seventy-six percent of the fatal victims were White; 15 percent were Black or African American; three percent were Hispanic or Latino; three percent were Asian.
(See table 2.)
- ❖ The six specific occupations with the most workplace fatalities in 2000 were:

1. Truck drivers	21	Two-thirds of the fatalities were highway accidents. Six were due to vehicle striking stationary object or equipment on the side of the road.
2. Construction laborers	8	Five died from falls to lower level.
3. Supervisors and proprietors, sales occupations	7	Six were homicides; four of which were shootings.
4. Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	6	Four were transportation accidents.
5. Groundskeepers and gardeners, except farm	6	Three were due to exposure to harmful substances or environments.
6. Automobile mechanics	6	
- ❖ Of the 26 highway fatalities, 7 or 27 percent were in the non-local trucking industry and three were in the logging industry. The largest amount involved truck drivers (14). Of the 22 out of 26 highway fatalities for which seat belt usage was known, 17 employees or 77 percent were not wearing their seat belt.

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- ❖ Robbers were the alleged perpetrators in five of the 14 homicides in the workplace. Nine of the work-related homicides were in the retail trade industry division; grocery stores accounted for four fatalities. Eleven of the homicides involved shootings. More homicides occurred on Tuesday (6) than any other day. Of the 10 out of 14 workplace homicides for which the time of incident was known, seven occurred during the day between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- ❖ Twelve of the 20 fatal workplace falls to lower level occurred in the construction industry division; five were in the roofing, siding, and sheet metal work industry and three occurred in the concrete work industry. Five of the fatalities involved construction laborers and three involved roofers.
- ❖ Electrocutions in the workplace accounted for 13 fatalities and were the highest since the census began in 1992. Seven of the workplace deaths were in the construction industry division; three were in the water, sewer, pipeline, and communications and power line construction industry.
- ❖ Work-related fatalities due to fires made up nine deaths in 2000, the highest since the census began in 1992. Six of the fatal injuries were in the services industry division.

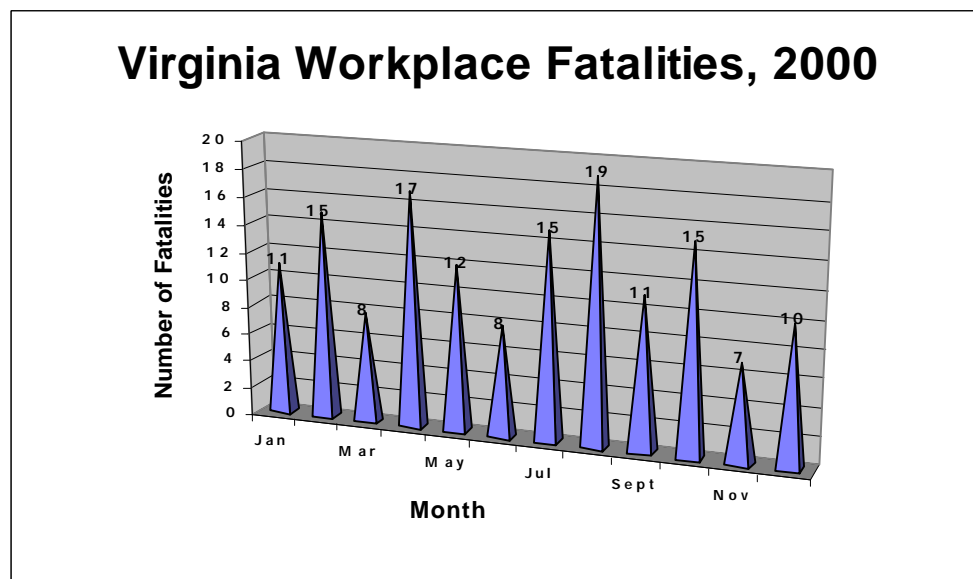


Figure 1

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Virginia Metropolitan Areas

The Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News MSA and the Richmond-Petersburg MSA had significant proportions of statewide workplace fatalities in 2000.

The Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) accounted for 15 percent of Virginia's work-related fatalities in 2000. Of the 22 cases, the leading event division, assaults and violent acts, made up eight fatalities; four were homicides and four were suicides. The second leading event division, exposure to harmful substances or environments, accounted for seven workplace fatalities; three were due to contact with overhead power lines. Five fatalities were in the retail trade industry division.

The Richmond-Petersburg MSA had 18 cases, 12 percent of the statewide fatality count for 2000. Transportation incidents made up five of the work-related fatalities. The leading industry division, construction, accounted for eight of the fatal workplace injuries.

The Lynchburg MSA accounted for five work-related fatalities in 2000. Transportation incidents made up four of the area fatalities.

The Charlottesville and Roanoke MSA's each had three workplace fatalities.

Virginia Counties / Cities

Fairfax County had the highest number of workplace fatalities in 2000. (See table B.)

**Table B. Fatal occupational injuries by county / city,
Virginia, 2000**

County	Fatalities		City	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Arlington	3	2	Alexandria	3	2
Brunswick	3	2	Fairfax	3	2
Buchanan	3	2	Newport News	4	3
Fairfax	12	8	Norfolk	3	2
Hanover	5	3	Portsmouth	3	2
Henrico	6	4	Roanoke	3	2
Henry	4	3	Virginia Beach	3	2
Loudoun	4	3			
Mecklenburg	3	2			
Rockingham	3	2			
Spotsylvania	5	3			
Wise	4	3			
York	3	2			

NOTE: Numbers are not shown for counties / cities that have less than three separate workplace fatalities due to our confidentiality agreement with the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by event or exposure, Virginia, 2000

Event ¹	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	148	100
Transportation incidents	48	32
Highway	26	18
Collision between vehicles, mobile equipment	10	7
Moving in same direction	3	2
Vehicle struck stationary object or equipment on side of road	9	6
Noncollision	5	3
Nonhighway (farm, industrial premises)	11	7
Noncollision accident	8	5
Overturned	7	5
Aircraft	3	2
Worker struck by vehicle, mobile equipment	6	4
Worker struck by vehicle, mobile equipment in parking lot or non-road area	6	4
Assaults and violent acts	26	18
Homicides	14	9
Shooting	11	7
Suicides	12	8
Contact with objects and equipment	22	15
Struck by object	10	7
Struck by falling object	6	4
Struck by flying object	3	2
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects	8	5
Caught in running equipment or machinery	5	3
Caught in or crushed in collapsing materials	4	3
Falls	22	15
Fall to lower level	20	14
Fall from ladder	4	3
Fall from roof	9	6
Fall through existing roof opening	3	2
Fall from roof edge	5	3
Fall to lower level, n.e.c.	3	2
Exposure to harmful substances or environments	18	12
Contact with electric current	13	9
Contact with overhead power lines	9	6
Oxygen deficiency	3	2
Drowning, submersion	3	2
Fires and explosions	12	8
Fires--unintended or uncontrolled	9	6
Fire in residence, building, or other structure ..	4	3

¹ Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Manual.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by selected characteristics, Virginia, 2000

Worker characteristics	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	148	100
Employee status		
Wage and salary workers ¹	115	78
Self-employed ²	33	22
Sex		
Men	133	90
Women	15	10
Age		
Under 20 years	5	3
20 to 24 years	14	9
25 to 34 years	25	17
35 to 44 years	41	28
45 to 54 years	36	24
55 to 64 years	17	11
65 years and over	9	6
Race		
White	113	76
Black or African American	22	15
Hispanic or Latino	5	3
Asian	4	3
Not reported	3	2

¹ May include volunteers and other workers receiving compensation.

² Includes paid and unpaid family workers, and may include owners of incorporated businesses, or members of partnerships.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

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Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation, Virginia, 2000

Occupation ¹	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	148	100
Managerial and professional specialty	18	12
Executive, administrative, and managerial	11	7
Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	6	4
Professional specialty	7	5
Health diagnosing occupations	3	2
Physicians	3	2
Technical, sales, and administrative support	19	13
Sales occupations	11	7
Supervisors and proprietors, sales occupations.....	7	5
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	6	4
Farming, forestry, and fishing	20	14
Farming operators and managers	5	3
Farmers, except horticultural	5	3
Other agricultural and related occupations	10	7
Farm occupations, except managerial	4	3
Farm workers	3	2
Related agricultural occupations	6	4
Groundskeepers and gardeners, except farm	6	4
Forestry and logging occupations	4	3
Timber cutting and logging occupations	4	3
Precision production, craft, and repair	37	25
Mechanics and repairers	15	10
Mechanics and repairers, except supervisors ..	14	9
Vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics, repairers	9	6
Automotive mechanics and apprentices ..	6	4
Industrial machinery repairers	3	2
Construction trades	20	14
Supervisors, construction occupations	3	2
Construction trades, except supervisors	17	11
Carpenters and apprentices	3	2
Roofers	3	2
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	49	33
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors ..	4	3
Transportation and material moving occupations ..	28	19
Motor vehicle operators	22	15
Truck drivers	21	14
Material moving equipment operators	4	3
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	17	11
Construction laborers	8	5
Laborers, except construction	4	3
Military occupations ²	4	3

¹ Based on the 1990 Occupational Classification System developed by the Bureau of the Census.

² Resident armed forces.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries by industry, Virginia, 2000

Industry ¹	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	148	100
Private Industry	140	95
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	16	11
Agricultural production - crops	6	4
General farms, primarily crop	5	3
Agricultural services	7	5
Landscape and horticultural services	6	4
Ornamental shrub and tree services	4	3
Mining	6	4
Coal mining	4	3
Bituminous coal and lignite mining	4	3
Construction	35	24
General building contractors	4	3
Heavy construction, except building	11	7
Highway and street construction	3	2
Heavy construction, except highway	8	5
Water, sewer, and utility lines	5	3
Special trades contractors	20	14
Roofing, siding, and sheet metal work	6	4
Concrete work	4	3
Miscellaneous special trade contractors	3	2
Manufacturing	20	14
Lumber and wood products	9	6
Logging	8	5
Transportation and public utilities	21	14
Trucking and warehousing	13	9
Trucking and courier services, except air	13	9
Local trucking, without storage	4	3
Trucking, except local	8	5
Electric, gas, and sanitary services	3	2
Sanitary services	3	2
Refuse systems	3	2
Retail trade	16	11
Food stores	4	3
Grocery stores	4	3
Miscellaneous retail	4	3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	4	3
Services	21	14
Business services	4	3
Automotive repair, services, and parking	9	6
Automotive repair shops	9	6
General automotive repair shops	7	5
Government ²	8	5

¹ Classified according to the *Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987*.

² Includes fatalities to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

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Technical Notes

The Virginia Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries was conducted by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Information on fatal occupational injuries was compiled from a variety of administrative sources including death certificates, motor vehicle traffic accident reports, medical examiners' reports, State and Federal workers' compensation reports, and other government investigative reports. Each fatality was substantiated by either two independent source documents or one source document and a follow-up questionnaire to the employer or other contact (excluding next-of-kin) who had knowledge about the circumstances of the incident.

The CFOI program is designed to provide the safety and health community with verified counts of fatal work injuries as well as basic information on fatalities such as how the injury occurred and the age, occupation, and other demographic data concerning the fatally injured person. It is hoped that the availability of improved, more detailed data will be used to help prevent future fatalities in the workplace.

While the purpose of the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries is to compile a complete count of traumatic workplace fatalities, information was also collected on fatal occupational illnesses that were recognized as work related or that occurred at work. A comprehensive count of fatalities resulting from occupational illnesses cannot be produced from current data largely because of the latency period associated with many occupational illnesses, as well as the difficulty in associating illnesses with exposures in the workplace. Therefore, fatal occupational illnesses are excluded from the tables.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) Definitions

The Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA-NC MSA consists of Gloucester, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, and York Counties in Virginia, Currituck County in North Carolina, and the Cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg in Virginia.

The Richmond-Petersburg, VA MSA consists of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and Prince George Counties and the Cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond in Virginia.

The Lynchburg, VA MSA consists of Amherst, Bedford, and Campbell Counties and the Cities of Bedford and Lynchburg in Virginia.

The Charlottesville, VA MSA consists of Albemarle, Fluvanna, and Greene Counties and the City of Charlottesville.

The Roanoke, VA MSA consists of Botetourt and Roanoke Counties and the Cities of Roanoke and Salem in Virginia.

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